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## THE VENUS OF PAGE.

 PAGE'S Venus, now exhibiting at the Dusseldorf Gallery in this city, commands great attention. It receives a world of notice from connoisseurs and the press, which might well gratify the artist and his friends. Of the work we might speak at some length, but will quote from the "Sunday Times" of this city, its notice, marked by discrimination:

"The exhibition of Page's 'Venus' at the Dusseldorf gallery, naturally attracts great attention. Placed in the midst of the *chef d'œuvres* of the greatest of the modern schools of painting, it does not suffer by the comparison. In some respects it gains by contrasted excellence. It is hung against the doorway of the main gallery. You enter by passing on either side of it. Directly opposite, at the farther end of the gallery, hangs No. 15, Sohn's really great picture of 'Diana and her Nymphs surprised at their Bath by Acteon.' The position of these two pictures compels you to contrast them. Sohn's work is fine. It is eloquent. The magnificent and contemptuous anger of the goddess of the silver bow, at the foolish temerity of the mortal trespasser upon the sacred privacy of herself and attendant nymphs, radiates from the calm, square forehead, the chiselled nose and slightly distending nostril, the fine lip, too celestially dignified even to curl, and the large quiet eyes of blue which interpret to you the pityless vengeance indicated by the outstretched arm and unmoving finger. You are satisfied. You see a goddess—but a very cool one. All her *entourage*, nymphs, water, foliage, are delightfully cool, and suggestive of wisdom and propriety. You turn to the "Venus" of Page, to the naughty but seductive goddess of love, and the fragrant odors of Amythont and Gnidos, the incense which enveloped with its gracious cloud, of old, the altars of Cyprus and the groves of Paphos, seem gathered in the light cloud which floats above her head. It is true there is something very human and womanly about Page's "Venus," but that does not make her less like the Venus Aphrodites. It is in fact the exact type of that divine effluence which, taking bodily form and pressure in woman's shape, old Hesiod tells us, sprang from the sea foam, and, sailing on a rose-colored shell, came first to the island of Cythera, with

Love and Desire attending her. It is said that Page has given us here a slightly idealised portrait of one of the most famous female models in Rome. If so, he has done after-times a service in preserving, by a pardonable myth, the counterfeit presentment of a beauty, in perfectness, which the world could not well afford to have wanted. The figure is nude, and yet entirely chaste, and proves at a glance that thesis so eloquently demonstrated by Sue, in one of his "Cardinal Sin" novels, that it is not what is shown, but what is concealed and suggested, which offends modesty, and beats the alarm to bad passions. Rich in tone, handled with a boldness at which purity of intention only arrives, every line swelling into voluptuous roundness the gracious *contours* which make up a perfect woman, it blends the rarest idealism with the most striking realism of physical beauty in form. Like the "Venus de Medici," or the "Venus" of Canova, it suggests only ideas of the beautiful. The tone of the picture is necessarily warm, but it is the warmth of color, not passion. The whole figure, in fact, floats in a gauzy sunshine of sensuous coloring which at once lights it up with a glow and flush of life and love, and at the same time clings about it like a mystic veil. The face is not beautiful after our ideal, but it is queenly in womanhood, and the hair, of that golden tint peculiar to the women of Venice, lights the head up with a kind of halo, and more perhaps than anything else indicates the goddess."

## ART GOSSIP.



ANY good and ambitious works are on the easels of our artists—many of whom went out for the summer to make special studies for contemplated works.

Stearns has been, since June, away off in Minnesota, pursuing the sports of that wild and picturesque region, and making elaborate studies of scenery, as well as of Indian character and life. He has in view a composition illustrating "Hiawatha's Wooing"—an exquisite subject for his skilful hand, which will embody many points of interest. Minnehaha Falls—the "Laughing Waters"—will, of course, have a share of the canvas, as it shares in an important part in the story. We are glad that Mr. Stearns has undertaken this work, and hope to announce its

completion in time for the next spring exhibition.

James Hart has a large composition in an advanced stage. It has a *locale* among the Adirondacks—from one of the isles of Placid Lake, with the water in the right foreground, and some of the representative hills in the background and distance; but it is a unity of these features in composition, rather than a transfer of actual scene. It will be a work of great labor and marked elaboration, and we shall not be surprised if it creates sensation, in art-circles, upon its exhibition. The work is commissioned.

Sonntag has just completed a large picture, a landscape composition, embodying the poetry of Italy—its hills and valleys—its ruins, old in glory and song, and its skies and waters placid as a glorious dream. It is a work of a high order of excellence, and will add measurably to the artist's already eminent reputation. As it is designed for public exhibition, we defer a fuller notice of it until our next issue. We can promise the public a rare treat and a sweet surprise in it. This artist has also painted a number of pieces for the "Cosmopolitan Art Association." They will be found enumerated in the catalogue of the "Supplement."

William Hart has returned from the shores and woods of Maine, with some superb studies, which will find their way into his promised works. He is now finishing his "Sunday Morning," exhibited at the last Academy exposition in a very unfinished state. It now looks like another picture, and certainly is one of beauty in composition and expression. It is commissioned by Mr. Swift, of this city.

Gignoux, we believe, has nothing especial "on the stocks." His "Winter View of Niagara Falls" is still on exhibition at Williams & Stevens' rooms. This work is a great success—by the best judges regarded as much superior to "The Falls," by Mr. Church. Gignoux, like Cropsey and Mignot, has a great fancy for Nature's *exceptional* aspects, and gives us some "striking" canvas in the way of sunsets, &c. These experiments, with crimson and blue and yellow, may please the fancy of the artist—they rarely satisfy the public.

Bellows is not yet returned from his season's wanderings. He has been, we hear, making very elaborate studies in the White Mountains region, and will, doubtless, return with a portfolio promising of good things. His "Lost Child" is on ex-